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December, 1998



"With state and local government working together, we have made significant strides toward improving our public health system."

The public health system is essential in every community. It works to protect people from exposure to disease and environmental hazards and to prevent illness, promoting the healthiest possible lives for all. Without public health protection, we would pay enormous costs in terms of disease, health care needs, environmental contamination, and quality of life.

The Legislature has directed the Washington State Department of Health, working with local and state health officials, to create a biennial Public Health Improvement Plan designed to strengthen the public

health system in our state. This document, the third edition of the plan, addresses:

- Why the public health system is essential and trends that will affect our health in the future
- What we are doing statewide and in communities to meet public health challenges
- What needs to be done to protect and improve the health of people in Washington.

People place high value on public health services and expect that basic public health protection and pre-

vention will exist in every community in the state.

With state and local government working together, we have made significant strides toward improving our public health system. We must keep this momentum as we move into our 21st century. By investing in prevention today, we can enjoy a healthy future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Mary C. Selecky".

Mary C. Selecky
Acting Secretary
Washington State
Department of Health

Public Health Improvement Plan

Other Important Resources

The Public Health Improvement Plan, 1994

The Public Health Improvement Plan, 1996

The initial plan and update, which describe the core functions of public health, provide a framework for development of the future public health system, outline basic capacity standards that should be met at the state and local levels, and provide a tool to help local health jurisdictions assess their capacity to meet public health needs in terms of core functions.

The PHIP in Action, 1998

A detailed description of projects supported by Local Capacity Development Funds during the 1998-2000 biennium, with staff contacts.

The Health of Washington State and 1998 Addendum

A detailed description of health status indicators, with discussion of the problem, comparisons of rates by county, and summaries of effective interventions for each indicator.

To obtain copies, call or write:

Washington State
Department of Health
PO Box 47890
Olympia, Washington, 98504-7890

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Local Health Assessments

Individual publications by each local health jurisdiction, reviewing locally selected health indicators and comparing them with state and national rates. Many incorporate the results of Behavioral Risk Factor Surveys. These documents lay the groundwork for local communities to set priorities for health improvement strategies.

Contact the local health jurisdiction to obtain copies of community health assessments.

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